more fully understood by reference to the following detailed description of the presently preferred, but nonetheless illustrative, musical instrument support in accordance with the present invention when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing the musical instrument support of the present invention mounted to the rear surface of a guitar for maintaining the guitar in a substantially perpendicular orientation to a player's body, while being played by a musician in a standing position with both hands free to explore the playing surface;

FIG. 2 is a rear view showing the musical instrument support in its inoperative position arranged adjacent the rear surface of the guitar to permit playing of the guitar in a conventional manner;

FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 3—3 of FIG. 2, showing the center and off-center mounting of the musical instrument support rod with respect to a mounting block and a projection of a slide block; and

FIG. 4 is a rear view showing the musical instrument support locked in its operative position arranged substantially perpendicular to the rear surface of the guitar.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring now to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals represent like elements, there is shown in FIG. 1 a musician **100** playing a guitar **102**, or other like stringed musical instrument such as a banjo, mandolin and the like. The guitar is constructed from a body **104** having a front surface **106** and rear surface **108**. A longitudinally extending neck **110** having a fretted surface **112** and a plurality of tuning pegs **114** extends from the body **104** in a conventional manner. As shown in phantom in FIG. **4**, a plurality of sound producing guitar strings **116** extend over a portion of the front surface **106** and frettted surface **112** between a bridge **118** and the tuning pegs **114**. A supporting device **120** is mounted onto the rear surface **108** of the body **104** for positioning the guitar **102** in a substantially perpendicular orientation to the upper body of the musician **100**. The supporting device **120** is constructed from an attachment **122**, a pair of mounting blocks **124, 126**, a pair of slide blocks **128, 130**, a longitudinally extending rod **132** and a coiled spring **133**. As more clearly shown in FIG. **2**, the slide block **130** is L-shaped having a projection **134** protruding therefrom.

Referring again to FIG. **2**, the mounting blocks **124, 126** are secured to the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102** in spaced-apart relationship by means of, for example, a plurality of screws or bolts. Mounting block **126** is U-shaped having an opening **136** and is mounted toward the neck **110** adjacent the edge of the guitar **102**. Rod **132** is attached between the mounting blocks **124, 126** and overlying the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102**. As more clearly shown in FIGS. **2** and **3**, the rod **132** is located at the center of the opening **136** provided within the mounting block **126**. The slide blocks **128, 130** are provided with a central opening, not shown, through which the rod **132** passes. In this manner, the slide blocks **128, 130** may be rotated about the rod **132**, as well as being movable laterally therealong. The rod **132** is located off-center with respect to the Y-axis of the projection **134** of the slide block **130** and on center with respect to the X-axis.

The slide blocks **128, 130** are spaced-apart with slide block **128** arranged adjacent mounting block **124** and slide block **130** arranged adjacent mounting block **126**. The slide blocks **128, 130** are provided with a slot **138**, as shown in FIG. **4**, for securing the attachment **122** thereto by means of, for example, screws or bolts. The attachment **122** is constructed generally of a flat plate **140** having a contoured body engaging portion **142**. As the mounting blocks **124, 126** are positioned adjacent one edge of the guitar **102**, the plate **140** is located centrally over the rear surface **108** of the guitar. The coiled spring **133** is compressed about the rod **132** between the mounting block **124** and slide block **128**.

The construction of the supportng device **120** having now been described, the reader's attention is directed to FIGS. **1–4** in general, where a detailed description of the manner of operating and using the supporting device will now be described. In this regard, the supporting device **120** is illustrated in an inoperative position in FIGS. **2** and **3** and in an operative position in FIGS. **1** and **4**. In the inoperative position, the attachment **122** is arranged overlying the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102**. Spring **133** biases the attachment **122** along rod **132** towards the mounting block **126**. As shown in FIG. **3**, as the rod **132** is positioned off-center with respect to the Y-axis of the projection **134** of the slide block **130**, a portion **144** of the projection engages an opposing portion of the mounting block **126**, thereby acting as a stop and preventing engagement of the projection within the opening **136**. The guitar **102** with the supporting device **120** being arranged in its inoperative position may be played in a conventional manner, that is, with the guitar being arranged in a substantially vertical orientation. As the attachment **122** is positioned adjacent and overlying the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102**, the supporting device **120** will not interfere with the conventional playing of the guitar.

When it is desired to activate the supporting device **120**, the musician **100** merely picks up the guitar **102** and rotates the body **104** into a substantially horizontal position. During rotation of the guitar **102**, gravity causes the attachment **122** to rotate about rod **132**. When the attachment **122** has achieved a substantially perpendicular orientation to the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102**, the projection **134** of the slide block **130** will now be arranged in registration with the opening **136** of the mounting block **126**. Once in registration, the spring **133** will cause the attachment **122** to be laterally moved along the rod **132** until the projection **134** of the slide block **130** is fully engaged within the opening **136** of the mounting block **126** as is shown in FIGS. **1** and **4**. the attachment **122**, now being in a locked position, is prevented from rotation from its substantially perpendicular operative position to its inoperative position overlying the rear surface **108** of the guitar **102**. The ability of the projection **134** to engage the opening **136** is due to the fact that the rod **132** is positioned centrally of the projection along its X-axis, although being positioned off-center along its Y-axis to prevent engagement when in an inoperative position.

Turning now to FIG. **1**, the guitar **102** is initially supported on the musician **100** by a strap **146** which is conventionally attached between one end of the body **104** and one end of the neck **110**. The guitar **102** is maintained in a substantially perpendicular orientation to the body of the musician **100** by the engagement of the body engaging portion **142** of the attachment **122** with the musician's upper leg portion. Thus, by resting the body engaging portion **142** on the lower body portion of the musician **100**, the guitar **102** may be maintained in a substantially perpendicular orientation without as-